

WOMENS' ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN
RELATION TO SEX-TYPING AND
SEX ROLE DISSATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

The degree to which women see themselves as being sex-typed, the dissatisfaction produced from womens' performance of their roles, and womens' alcohol consumption is examined. Sex-typing was measured using the Bem Sex Role Inventory and, dissatisfaction by a questionnaire designed specifically for the present research. Women were divided into three groups depending on their level of alcohol consumption and were matched between these groups, on age and marital status. These women then completed the two questionnaires.

Results show that alcoholic women have significantly higher sex-role dissatisfaction scores than do women who consume low amounts of alcohol. The results also indicate two trends. Firstly that alcoholic women show more sex-role dissatisfaction than women who consume medium amounts of alcohol. Secondly that alcoholic women are more sex-typed than non-alcoholic women.

Sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction do have a significant linear relationship with alcohol consumption. However, larger error margins are associated with their ability to predict alcohol consumption.

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1. INTRODUCTION:

A women's sex-typing, whether this leads to a dissatisfaction with her role in life, or her handling of it, and whether this will in turn lead to increased alcohol consumption is considered in this research.

Women of all ages, socio-economic and educational levels have been the focus of attention in this research. As well a wide range of drinking behaviours have been examined. These behaviours range from women who do not drink at all, or very rarely, to those who have requested treatment because of their abuse of alcohol.

A woman's view of her role has been listed in relevant literature as a determinant of her drinking. Why this is so, however, has never been satisfactorily answered. Assumptions that there is psychological conflict within the alcoholic woman regarding her preferences to be masculine or feminine have been made. This conflict is then considered to be important to women's alcohol consumption.

The present research has been confined to how strongly sex-typed a woman sees herself as being. It is expected that the more rigid the women's role concept, the greater the dissatisfaction will be with her role-related performance, as a result of differing social pressures. These social pressures come from other significant people in women's lives, and their differing expectations of her. If such people expect responses which are incongruous with how women see themselves; or if women feel inadequate in their ability to conform to others standards, a dissatisfaction with their roles will result. Alcohol may be used to cope with the anxiety that this dissatisfaction produces.

The literature review first examines studies concerned with

internal sex-role conflict. A critical examination of the previous research is presented with the limitations of the methodology highlighted. From these limitations the rationale for the current research is presented. Research in the areas of self-esteem, persuasibility and the anxiety reducing effects of alcohol are discussed and an argument presented as to why these factors may be critical to women's drinking behaviour. From the literature review, the proposals of this research are then generated.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE:

A large number of the first reviews of women alcoholics were concerned with adjustment and acceptance of the feminine role (Curlee, 1967; Curran, 1937; Lindbeck, 1972; Lisansky, 1957; Kinsey, 1966; Wall, 1937; Wood & Duffy, 1966). It was agreed that women alcoholics had doubts about their adequacy as women and drank in order to over-come these self-doubts. Little empirical evidence existed to support this hypothesis though. Therefore the research can be criticised for being drawn from case-histories alone.

Wilsnack (1973 a & b) provided empirical support for the earlier hypothesis by defining a sex-role conflict, as having strong conscious motivation to be feminine while unconsciously showing masculine identification. Parker (1972) also found that alcoholic women experienced a sex-role conflict, but in the opposite direction to that described by Wilsnack (1973 a & b). Parker's (1972) use of feminine emotional responses as indices of unconscious femininity is questioned by Beckman (1978) who argues that such indices may only be measures of instability, neuroticism or severity of the pathology in women.

Scida and Vannicelli (1979) consolidated these two views by concluding that the magnitude of the sex-role conflict was the important factor in alcoholism, rather than the direction that it took.

Recent studies have failed to produce such significant results. However, Beckman (1978), McLachlan et al (1979) and Schwab-Bakman et al (1981) all found that alcoholic women showed some bias towards a dissatisfaction with their functioning in female roles. A quarter of Beckman's (1978) alcoholic subjects were shown to have an unconscious masculine and conscious feminine conflict, while Schwab-Bakman et al

concluded that alcoholic women wanted to be more feminine.

Parker et al (1980) found no support for the hypothesis that women adopting both a masculine and feminine role were more likely to become heavy drinkers. ^{Casswell} Casswell (1982) drew a similar conclusion from a New Zealand sample. Although these latter studies have been used to dispute previous research, both describe the conflict arising from having two roles, as opposed to the psychological dissatisfaction produced when women are discontented with their role or their way of handling it. These two areas of research, namely conflict from internal psychological dissatisfaction and that from having two roles, cannot be compared without this delineation.

The disparate nature of the measurements used can account for diversity in previous research findings. Methodological criticisms can also be made of many of the studies, for example, Beckman (1978) and Wilsnack (1973a, 1973b). These criticisms include the use of projective techniques to measure unconscious values, the assumption that masculinity and femininity are bi-polar traits and the conferment of traditional definitions on these traits.

Beckman (1978), Scida & Vannicelli (1979) and Wilsnack (1973a, 1973b) have all made use of projective techniques. In spite of good face validity projective techniques do not have a strong reliability. Wilsnack's (1973b) study is an example of this in her use of the Franck Draw-a-person test. Alcoholic women were asked to draw a human figure. It was assumed that if this figure was predominately angular, women were unconsciously masculine, whereas if the figure was primarily curved the drawer was said to be unconsciously feminine. Also, as alcoholic women were in the withdrawal stage from alcohol when completing this test, there was a tendency to produce more angular

lines because of inadequate recovery of co-ordination (McLachlan & Head, 1974).

Although recent research has suggested that masculinity and femininity should be viewed as independent, uni-polar dimensions, (Bem, 1974, 1975; Constantinople, 1973; Spence, Helmreich & Stapp, 1975) researchers in the alcohol field have failed to incorporate these findings. Instead they have continued to define masculinity and femininity as bi-polar concepts. Further, masculinity and femininity have been considered in a very traditional manner. This is seen in Wilsnack's (1973b) study where "wishing for more children" was the measure determining whether or not women wanted a more feminine role.

Together, these assumptions cause women who choose a less traditionally feminine role to be seen as being masculine. As societal values and concepts concerning roles have been undergoing re-evaluations, obvious biases can occur through using this approach.

As sex-role research has not used similar measurements, and there are methodological inadequacies, the findings in this area are difficult to compare.

Projective techniques were not used in the present research as no attempts were made to measure unconscious values. Instead the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) was used to measure how sex-typed women perceived themselves as being. The BSRI directly measures how a woman views herself on scales of masculinity and femininity, and assumes that masculinity and femininity are independent and uni-polar. Comparisons with earlier research can be carried out as Beckman (1978), Scida & Vannicelli (1979) and Schwab-Bakman et al (1981) have all used the BSRI.

With the BSRI a second questionnaire was used in which women were asked to evaluate their own sex-roles. In this way traditional methodological biases were hopefully avoided.

Earlier research assumed that the conflict was within the individual and between the conscious and unconscious levels of sex-role identity. This remains unproven because of anomalies in sex-role research.

Instead this research examined the conflict between sex-role identity and perceived societal demands regarding appropriate sex-linked behaviour. Beck (1969) concluded that conflict between the self and social role generated tension and anxiety because it produces a state of dissonance. According to Rogarian (1965) theory, if women have a sex-role stereotype that fails to correspond with what they think of themselves, with what they think others want them to be, or with what they would like to be, then psychological conflict results. There will be some coping responses resulting from this dissonance but it is predicted that women may also use the non-coping response of turning to alcohol.

Research in the areas of self-esteem, persuasibility, and the anxiety reducing effects of alcohol further reinforce the view that a dissatisfaction with her sex-role may lead women to increased alcohol consumption.

The self-esteem of women alcoholics is significantly lower than that of non-alcoholic women (Jones, 1971; Kinsey, 1966; McLachlan et al, 1979; Wood & Duffy, 1966). Role conflict appears to be important in generating this lack of self-esteem. Women, more so than men, cite specific events that have activated their heavy drinking behaviour. The death of a spouse, divorce, children leaving home and gynaecological

problems are examples of such events and have been noted by Belfor et al (1971), Blane (1961), Curlee (1968), Kinsey (1966), Lisanski (1957), and Wilsnack (1973 a & b). These events invariably involve some adjustment concerning sex-roles as they all strike at the base of a women's role. In order to adjust to her changing roles, and therefore function in life, women must change many of their long held beliefs. The inability of women to do this can lead to self-dissatisfaction and feelings of incompetence. When women turn to alcohol to alleviate corresponding tensions the instability of their femininity is further accentuated. Women who drink heavily are not seen by society as being feminine. More importantly, the women themselves do not view heavy drinking women as being feminine Curlee (1968), Stafford & Petway (1977).

Societal pressures are more likely to be dominant in the causation of stress in women than in men. Mogar et al (1971) suggested that women learn to be independent and competitive but there are often few outlets for these traits and they are difficult to reconcile with the traditional female role. Therefore women in contemporary society have more difficulty in achieving a stable identity than men. As women are more persuasible, they are also, more likely to be influenced by social pressure than men (Cox & Bauer, 1964). Early training in sex-roles when girls, more so than their male counterparts, are instructed to conform to norms set by others, may be the cause of this. With the alcoholic women there may be an even stronger impulse to conform as people with low self-esteem are deemed to be more persuasible, as well as being more dependent on the situation and more responsive to group pressures (Cohan, 1954; Janis & Rife, 1959; Cox & Bauer, 1964). These studies also found that women with very low specific self-confidence will not be easily influenced and will in fact move in the opposite direction from which the pressure is coming. This may be true of women in later stages of alcoholism and the result can be more anxiety, guilt

feelings and resistance.

Alcohol is known to have anxiety-reducing effects both on a subjective and physiologic level for heavy drinking women (Eddy, 1979). It is for this reason that it is often used to cope with stress and anxiety in life. Heavy drinking women are known to experience more anxiety reduction after alcohol consumption than women who are light drinkers or heavy drinking men (Tracey & Nathan, 1974). This may be the result of evidence that indicates women are more likely than men to drink in order to forget pressures or settle their nerves (Mulford, 1977). Because women expect alcohol to alleviate tension it then begins to serve this purpose.

In conclusion, as previous research has shown that alcoholic women experience some dissatisfaction with their sex-role, this dissatisfaction may be an important causal factor in the development of alcoholism in women. A primary factor in the women alcoholic's low self-esteem, appears to relate to their sex-role. Low self-esteem then makes women alcoholics more vulnerable to social pressure. As alcoholic women experience more psychological stress and use alcohol to relieve this stress, pressures increase because of their drinking. A state of dissonance between women's perceptions and their social role now becomes evident. It is therefore proposed that role dissatisfaction, whether because of outside pressure or internal discontentment, may be a primary factor in alcoholism in women.

There were three aims in the present research. Firstly to determine whether alcoholic women have a more sex-typed view of themselves, than women who are regular drinkers and those women who don't drink regularly. Secondly to determine whether alcoholic women experience more dissatisfaction as regards to their sex-roles than regular and non-regular drinking

women. Finally to assess whether sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction can predict alcohol consumption.

The basic working hypothesis was that women who view themselves as more strongly sex-typed will experience more dissatisfaction with their sex-roles and will consume more alcohol to relieve associated pressures.

3. METHODOLOGY:

3.1 Sampling Criteria

All subjects used in this research were women. Alcoholic women were obtained from three out-patient treatment centres for alcoholism in Timaru and Christchurch, and one in-patient unit in Christchurch. The sampling criteria used to select women alcoholics required that:-

1. they were undergoing treatment because of their alcohol consumption. All the treatment centres involved were voluntary and so subjects considered that they needed help for their alcoholism.
2. they were all in the initial stages of their treatment. (This varied especially between in-patient and out-patient centres and so was decided by the subject's therapist who issued the questionnaire to them).
3. Prior to admission they had all been drinking more than 30mls, of pure or absolute alcohol, a day. This is the lowest level of consumption that has been linked with liver damage (Casswell, 1980).

These women were then matched with a regular drinker and a light or infrequent drinker, of the same age and marital status. Criteria for regular drinkers was that:-

1. they all consumed alcohol on the regular basis of at least once weekly.
2. they had never considered that they needed treatment because of their drinking behaviour.
3. they were drinking between 6-30mls/day of pure alcohol, either through frequent drinking or more heavy binge drinking.

The criteria for light or infrequent drinkers were that:-

1. they consumed alcohol on an irregular basis, less than once weekly.
2. they had never considered that they needed treatment because of their drinking behaviour.
3. of those drinking, they averaged less than 6mls/day of pure alcohol.

In order to determine drinking levels women marked one of four options, as to how often they drank, namely:-

- rarely
- 2 or 3 times a month
- once or twice a week
- 4 or more times a week

Four or more times a week was used as the highest category as Johnson, De Vris & Haughton (1966) found that alcoholic women drank either three to four times a week or every day. In conjunction with this a question was asked to gauge the amount that was drunk on each occasion. For this they rated one of the following:-

- one drink
- 2-4 drinks
- 5-6 drinks
- 7 drinks

These drinks were defined as 1 glass of sherry, port or wine, one nip of spirits, or one 12oz glass of beer. Drinking seven or more drinks on a regular basis would be the minimum needed to damage the liver. To be considered a light or irregular drinker, women had to drink less than 4 drinks, not more than 3 times a month. Regular

drinkers had to drink at least once weekly. The primary consideration for the alcoholic drinker was to have been admitted to a treatment agency, although as well, these women were drinking at least 5 drinks, 4 or more times weekly. Self-reported drinking is known to be an underestimation of the amount actually consumed. Because these categories were so broad (i.e. in treatment, drinking weekly and drinking less than once weekly) the division of subjects into these groups cannot be considered invalid.

The women were then matched between the three drinking groups, for marital status and age. Marital status was used as it gave an indication of whether or not women were carrying out the traditionally feminine role of a wife. In addition Casswell (1980) has shown marital status to be a predictor of alcohol consumption and so it was considered important to control for its effects. For the purpose of this research women were divided into three groups. Married and de facto states were combined, as were divorced, separated and widowed categories. Three groups were thus derived namely, married, previously married and single.

Age was controlled for as sex-roles are not assigned independently of a women's age. Also it was considered that dissatisfaction may differ between stages in a woman's life.

3.2 Subjects

The sampling criteria resulted in a total of 60 women. Each drinking category had 20 women. In the sample the mean age of the women was 33.1 years (standard deviation of 12.87 years). With respect to marital status, 33 women were married, 12 had been previously married and 15 were single. All subjects were European as no women of other races were in treatment during the data collection period.

Table 1 shows the educational levels attained by women in this research.

	Alcoholic Drinkers	Regular Drinkers	Irregular Drinkers	Total
Primary School	0	1	0	1
Secondary School without S.C. or U.E.	12	2	6	20
Secondary School with either S.C., U.E. or both	5	6	6	17
Tertiary Education	3	11	8	22

A predominance of alcoholic women had attended secondary school, but did not have the qualifications of School Certificate or University Entrance. Over half of the regularly drinking women had some form of tertiary education e.g. nursing training, teachers' college, university.

Table 2 shows the occupations of the women in this research.

	Alcoholic n=20	Regular Drinker n=20	Irregular Drinker n=20	Total
Housewife	9	5	4	18
Professional/ semi-professional	3	7	5	15
Managerial/official	0	1	1	2
Store/office/sales	1	4	4	9
Unskilled	3	1	0	4
Student	0	1	2	3
Other	1	0	0	1
Unemployed	2	0	1	3
Total	20	20	20	60

The largest employment group was that of housewives, particularly among the alcoholic women. There were also a large number of women in the professional/semi-professional category, with the most prominent group being regular drinkers. Casswell's (1980) research concurs with this, giving evidence that professional women constitute a large proportion of the regularly drinking women in New Zealand.

3.3 Procedure

Both questionnaires were completed by the women and then returned to the therapist. The term 'sex-role' was defined as "the role society expects you to perform because of the gender you are i.e. male or female". No explanations other than this, were offered.

The Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) was completed first. The BSRI was first devised by Bem in 1974. There are 60 items in this questionnaire which are rated by the subjects on a scale of 1-7, as to how well they describe themselves. Three scales are involved, those of masculinity, femininity and social desirability, each containing 20 items. Scores derived from these scales classify women as having high masculinity and low femininity, high femininity and low masculinity, or as being unsex-typed. These groups are determined by the degree of difference between the masculine and feminine scores. This difference is converted to a 't'-ratio. The nearer this 't'-ratio is to 0, the more unsex-typed the woman. Feminine self-typing is defined as $+ \geq -2.025$, while masculine sex-typing is indicated by $+ \geq 2.025$.

By means of a median split procedure a division in the unsex-typed category between androgynous (i.e. high scores on both masculinity and femininity scales) and undifferentiated individuals (i.e. low scores on both masculinity and femininity scales) was proposed by Spence,

Helmreich & Stapp (1975) and Bem (1977). Although this median-split procedure is widely used, the present research only examined differences between women who regard themselves as unsex-typed and women who regard themselves as highly masculine or highly feminine. Therefore divisions within the unsex-typed category were judged unnecessary and Bem's first method of analysis, namely the 't'-ratio method was employed.

According to Silvern & Ryan (1979) unsex-typed women as categorized by either the 't'-ratio method or median-split procedure, were associated with superior adjustment in comparison with sex-typed women. Androgynous and undifferentiated scorers do not differ in the degree to which they are independent of social pressure (Bem, 1977). This is an important consideration for the present research. Therefore unsex-typed women were viewed as belonging to one group.

The reliability and the validity of the BSRI are well documented (Bem, 1974, 1975; Bem, Martyna & Watson, 1976).

A second questionnaire was designed specifically for this research to provide a measure of dissatisfaction with womens' sex roles (Appendix I). Women rated their own and friends sex-roles as either being primarily masculine, primarily feminine, or containing elements of both masculinity and femininity. Definitions of masculine and feminine roles were not attempted so that traditional biases were hopefully avoided. Sex roles of the subject, significant other people in her life and societies views on these sex-roles were examined by the questionnaire. The significant other people in womens' lives, were husbands, children, parents and friends of both sexes.

Pressures that women felt from their sex-roles were also considered. A dissatisfaction level arising from the women's answers was measured using an ordinal scale from 1-5. Scores of 1 indicated that women felt

"very happy" with their responses on the questionnaire. Whereas a score of 5 indicated that women were very concerned by their answers. These options were presented after each question to obtain a dissatisfaction score. Scores from each option were totalled and divided by the number of options answered to give the dissatisfaction score. [This division was important as six of the seventeen items had a 'non-applicable' option]. The higher the score, the greater the dissatisfaction with their role and their way of handling it, and the greater the pressures they felt from others concerning it. Although it was not practicable to assess the questionnaires reliability and validity, some estimates of reliability could be obtained from the internal consistency of the womens answers.

4. RESULTS:

 The three proposals of the present research shall be considered in turn, in the presentation of the results. The proposals were, firstly, to determine whether alcoholic women have a more sex-typed view of themselves than regularly or irregularly drinking women. Secondly, to determine whether alcoholic women experience more dissatisfaction as regards their sex-roles, than regularly or irregularly drinking women. Finally, to assess whether sex-typing and role dissatisfaction can predict alcohol consumption.

 In the results, the statistical significance of the observed differences between variables is reported at the probability (p) levels of .05 and .01. The mean scores and standard deviations, of alcohol consumption, degree of sex-typing, and sex-role dissatisfaction are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 - Mean scores and standard deviations of measures of:- alcohol consumption, degree of sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction

	<u>Alcoholic Women</u>		<u>Regular Drinkers</u>		<u>Irregular Drinkers</u>	
	n = 20		n = 20		n = 20	
	M	sd	M	sd	M	sd
Alcohol Consumption (mls of pure alcohol)	51.13	2.25	15.5	4.46	1.99	2.41
Degree of sex-typing	2.72	1.52	1.897	1.34	1.796	2.03
Dissatisfaction from sex-roles	2.67	.91	2.38	.48	2.16	.48

Results from the first proposal to determine whether alcoholic women have a more sex-typed view of themselves than regularly or irregularly drinking women are presented first.

A single factor ANOVA with randomized measures was used to ascertain significant variances of the sex-typing scores between the three levels of alcohol consumption. These three levels of alcohol consumption were:-

- (1) under 6mls per day of pure or absolute alcohol
- (2) between 6-30mls per day of pure alcohol
- (3) over 30mls per day of pure alcohol

Irregular drinking, regular drinking and alcoholic drinking are the corresponding labels, in order, for each of these levels.

The sex-typing scores obtained in the present research ranged from 0-6. Scores of 0 denote no sex-typing, namely women who use an equal number of masculine and feminine traits to describe themselves. The higher the sex-typing scores, the greater the difference perceived by women between their masculine and feminine traits. Therefore the higher degree of sex-typing. Whether masculinity or femininity was the dominant trait was not considered important as the magnitude of sex-typing, rather than its direction was the focus of the present research.

Bem (1974) used $t \geq \pm 2.025$ to distinguish between women who are sex-typed and those women who are not. T scores between $-1 \leq t \leq +1$ indicate near sex-typing. The percentages of women in the present study which fall in these three groups are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 - The percentage of women in each sex-typing score division, of unsex-typed, near sex-typed and sex-typed

	Alcoholic Drinkers	Regular Drinkers	Irregular Drinkers
Unsex-typed scores ($t = 0-\underline{+1}$)	10%	15%	30%
Near sex-typed scores ($t = \underline{+1}-\underline{+2.025}$)	25%	55%	35%
Sex-typed scores ($t \geq -2.025$)	65%	30%	35%
Total	100%	100%	100%

This is a convenient way to present sex-typing scores. No divisions were made in the analysis however as the magnitude of sex-typing was the primary focus.

The overall relationship between alcohol consumption and sex-typing was not statistically significant ($F, 2/57, = 3.10, p > .05$). However a trend between sex-typing scores indicates that alcoholic women may be more sex-typed than non-alcoholic women.

Secondly is the proposal to examine whether alcoholic women experience more sex-role dissatisfaction than do women who are regular or irregular drinkers. Dissatisfaction scores can vary from 1-5. Women rating themselves as 'very happy' in all areas concerning their sex-roles obtained a score of 1. A score of 5 indicated that women were very concerned about areas of their sex-roles.

A single factor ANOVA with randomized measures was used to ascertain significant variances between levels of alcohol consumption on sex-role dissatisfaction scores.

The overall relationship between alcohol consumption and sex-role dissatisfaction was highly significant ($F_{2/57} = 30.23$, $p < .01$). Comparisons using t-tests were made between each level of alcohol consumption to determine which levels had the most significant variance. The t-test values from the comparison, giving significance levels for a two-tailed t-test are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 - T-tests of sex-role dissatisfaction scores between levels of alcohol consumption

	<u>Alcoholic</u>	<u>Regular Drinkers</u>	<u>Irregular Drinkers</u>
Alcoholic		$t = 1.589$	$t = 3.08^*$
Regular Drinkers			$t = .149$
Irregular Drinkers			
df = 57	$*(p < .01)$		

The comparison between alcoholic women and women who are irregular drinkers was statistically significant, in a two-tailed test, at the .01 level. Other comparisons were not significant. However, that alcoholic women experience more dissatisfaction with their sex-roles than women who regularly consume alcohol is suggested by a strong trend between dissatisfaction scores.

The third proposal, to assess whether sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction can predict alcohol consumption in women, was examined last.

A multiple regression analysis determined to what degree sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction could predict alcohol consumption. The regression equation used was $Y' = A + B_1 X_1 + B_2 X_2$. Y' is the predicted value of the dependent variable, in this case alcohol consumption. The equation for the variables in this research was:-

$$Y' = [-24.0 + (16.92 \times \text{dissatisfaction scores}) \pm 5.04] + (2.79 \times \text{sex-typing score}) \pm 1.93 \pm 19.1$$

The null hypothesis used in this analysis was that there is no linear relationship between sex-typing, sex-role dissatisfaction and the amount of alcohol consumed. The relationship between sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction (independent variables) and alcohol consumption (dependent variable) was positive. So as the independent variables increase so will alcohol consumption. The relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable was significant at the .001 level ($F = 8.45$).

However, sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction account for only 23% of the variability in alcohol consumption. That is, 23% of the variation in the amount of alcohol consumed is explained by a linear regression on the two independent variables of sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction.

Sex-role dissatisfaction, when examined alone with the effects of sex-typing controlled for, accounted for 20% of the variance. Sex-typing, therefore is not considered a significant variable in this equation. The unexplained variance in alcohol consumption is 77%. Error margins were considered, as only 68% of the population is accounted for by the regression equation. This was done through 95% confidence intervals. The 95% confidence interval for dissatisfaction is between 6.82 and 27.01 and for sex-typing is between -1.07 and 6.64.

On average the predicted scores of alcohol consumption will deviate from the actual score by 19.1 units on the amount of alcohol scale. These large error margins mean that strong conclusions cannot be drawn about alcohol consumption from the degree of sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction. The small sample size of the present research ($n = 60$) can to some extent account for the large error margins.

Intercorrelations between the three variables of alcohol consumption, sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 - Intercorrelations between alcohol consumption, degree of sex-typing, and sex-role dissatisfaction.

	Alcohol Consumption	Degree of Sex-typing	Sex-role Dissatisfaction
Alcohol Consumption		.276*	.448**
Degree of Sex-typing			.253*
Sex-role Dissatisfaction			
* ($p < 0.05$) ** ($p < 0.01$)			

The correlation between sex-role dissatisfaction and degree of sex-typing is significant ($p < 0.05$). However as the tolerance level from the regression equation is high (tolerance = .936) there is not a strong relationship between sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction. Only a weak linear relationship exists between how sex-typed women are and their level of role dissatisfaction.

5. DISCUSSION:

The results obtained from the data analysis point to four main findings. Firstly, the overall relationship between alcohol consumption and sex-typing was not statistically significant. Secondly, the overall relationship between alcohol consumption and sex-role dissatisfaction was highly significant. As a third finding, the relationship between sex-typing, dissatisfaction, and alcohol consumption was statistically significant but only accounted for twenty-three percent of the variation in alcohol consumption. Finally the correlation between sex-typing and dissatisfaction was statistically significant. Each of these relationships will be commented on in turn in the discussion.

The first finding emanates from the proposal to examine whether alcoholic women are more sex-typed than women who drink regularly and those who don't drink regularly.

Concern with the conscious and unconscious values women place on their roles has dominated research concerning sex-roles in alcoholic women. Although an elevation on masculinity and femininity scales has been shown by Mogar et al (1970). Sex-typing, has not previously been considered alone, as a determinant of drinking behaviour in women.

The overall relationship between sex-typing and alcoholic consumption was not statistically significant. However, the trend between sex-typing scores suggests that alcoholic women are more sex-typed than non-alcoholic women. Sex-typing scores of women in the present research were divided into those showing a masculine sex-typing and those showing a feminine sex-typing (Appendix 2). Alcoholic women were nearly twice as likely to have a masculine sex-typing while non-alcoholic women were twice as likely to have

a feminine sex-typing. It has been observed that alcoholic women perceive themselves as being less feminine than non-alcoholic women. (Belfer, 1971; Parker, 1972; Scida & Vannicelli, 1979; and Wilsnack, 1973a & b). Although this has only been considered in relation to sex-role conflict in the latter three studies.

Alcoholic women may be drinking more, because they see themselves as being masculine, and so are less likely to adhere to traditional restrictions of femininity. While alcoholic women are seen as being masculine however, recent sex-role research considers masculinity in women to be adaptive in life situations. Masculine characteristics may be important in determining life satisfaction, personality characteristics and attitudes (Hoffman & Fidell, 1979). Bem (1977) concluded that masculine and androgynous individuals are similar in having high self-esteem, with Kelly & Worrell (1977) relating high self-esteem to masculine characteristics. Finally, masculine women are seen to be adaptive, competent and secure (Jones et al 1978). Forty percent of the alcoholic women in the present research perceived themselves as being sex-typed in a masculine direction. However, in opposition to sex-role research, alcoholic women are noted for lack of self-esteem and security (Beckman et al 1980; Gomberg, 1981; McLachlan et al, 1979).

If alcoholic women are seen as labelling themselves as masculine, after they begin drinking heavily, these two views can be reconciled. The drinking behaviour changes first, then attitudes towards themselves change to compensate for their masculine drinking behaviour. Attitudes change so that the discrepancy between behaviour and attitudes is not maintained. Alcoholic women may perceive themselves as masculine without incorporating adaptive features that masculine sex-typing produces in non-alcoholic women. Therefore feelings of incompetency and low

self-esteem remain, but now alcoholic women perceive themselves as having mainly masculine traits.

Without further research this possibility cannot be conclusively determined. The occupations of women in the present research, however, give some reinforcement for this view.

Over half the alcoholic women in the present research are not engaged in traditional masculine roles. Instead they are housewives or unemployed. If alcoholic women perceive themselves as masculine before drinking heavily it is likely they would have more masculine orientated occupations. At least, not be engaged in more feminine occupations than non-alcoholic women, which is seen to be true in the present research (refer to Table 2). Evidence, therefore suggests that drinking heavily comes before women begin to regard themselves as masculine.

That alcoholic women are more sex-typed, is implied by the trend among sex-typing scores. The alcoholic women who sees herself as femininely sex-typed must also be considered. Sex-role research suggests that feminine women are passive, introverted, have low self-esteem, high anxiety and low social acceptance (Bem, 1977; Hoffman & Fidell, 1979; Sears, 1970; Spence et al, 1975; Webb, 1963). Feminine women are considered much less adjustive than masculine or unsex-typed women. This is in agreement with the traditional view of the women alcoholic. Thus feminine sex-typing may also occur after women begin to drink heavily. Women may perceive themselves as overly feminine in order to compensate for their masculine drinking behaviour. Women in Schwab-Bakman et al's (1981) study may have wished to be more feminine for this compensation. This latent perception of sex-typing among alcoholic women may account for its predominance.

In conjunction with the second finding, the proposal to examine whether alcoholic women experience more sex-role dissatisfaction than regular or non-regularly drinking women is discussed next.

The relationship between alcohol consumption and sex-role dissatisfaction was highly significant. The variance between the dissatisfaction scores of alcoholic women and women who do not drink regularly was significant in a two-tailed, t-test. Although the variance between other levels of alcohol consumption failed to reach a significant value, a strong trend suggests a difference between alcoholic women and women who drink regularly. Therefore alcoholic women experience more dissatisfaction with their sex-roles than women who are not regular drinkers, and maybe women who do drink regularly.

Sex-role dissatisfaction has not been specifically researched for its contribution to alcoholism in women. However dissatisfaction has been evident in women alcoholics, and therefore commented on in previous research. Kinsey (1966) suggested that alcoholic women perceive themselves as failing to live up to the expectations of their family and friends, and so they feel that they are failures in the eyes of significant others. Kinsey (1966) also suggested that alcoholic women rejected the feminine role. Kinsey's (1966) speculations were based on case histories but later empirical research also shows indications of alcoholic women being dissatisfied with their role. A trend for alcoholic women to feel concerned with their roles of wife, partner and homemaker in intimate relationships and in present jobs was reported by McLachlan et al (1970). They also suggested that alcoholic women felt a dissatisfaction with their functioning within female roles. Corrigan (1980) found that 57% of alcoholic women had difficulty with their role as a wife and 42% with their role as a mother.

Finally, Weathers & Billingsley (1982) found that alcoholic women had a negative view of their sex-role.

The alcoholic women's sex-role dissatisfaction and the pressures that she feels from significant people in her life, may be related to her low self-esteem. Because of this low self-esteem, alcoholic women feel dissatisfaction with everything in their lives. Sex-role dissatisfaction, however, may contribute significantly to this low self-esteem in alcoholic women. That sex-role dissatisfaction scores vary between levels of alcohol consumption indicates the importance of this dissatisfaction to self-esteem.

Sex-role dissatisfaction scores were measured by women rating how 'bothered' or concerned they were with areas of their sex-roles. Being 'bothered' may be indicative of associated anxiety, therefore anxieties that women experience concerning sex-roles may also be examined.

Dissatisfaction scores between drinking levels varied. Therefore women who do not drink experience little anxiety regarding their sex-role, women who drink regularly may experience more anxiety, and alcoholic women experience the most anxiety concerning their sex-roles. This indicates, along with Eddy (1979), that women do use alcohol to cope with pressures and the anxiety that these pressures produce. Because of sex-role dissatisfactions positive relationship with alcohol consumption, sex-role dissatisfaction must create enough pressure on women to ensure that corresponding anxieties have to be dealt with. Women then use alcohol for this purpose. As alcohol is a depressant it is ideally suited to relieving stress.

The third finding is associated with the proposal to assess whether sex-role dissatisfaction and sex-typing can predict alcohol consumption. An association between variables is not the same as

one variable causing another. So in the present research whether sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction predict alcohol consumption was directly examined. Twenty-three percent of the variance in the amount of alcohol consumed was accounted for by sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction. Twenty percent of the variance could be predicted by sex-role dissatisfaction scores alone thus accentuating the importance of sex-role dissatisfaction in the development of alcoholism in women.

The heterogeneity of women alcoholics may account to some extent for there not being a high causal relationship between variables. Schukit et al (1969) differentiated between two groups of women alcoholics - those women for whom alcoholism was the primary disorder and women for whom it was considered secondary. Fort and Poterfield (1961) found that 12% of women became alcoholics without personality maladjustment or emotional stress. These alcoholic women would then be less likely to experience the same sex-role dissatisfaction.

The sex-role questionnaire itself may have contributed to the low causal relationship of sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction with alcohol consumption. The questionnaire was deliberately made indirect in examining sex-roles to avoid traditional sex-role biases. This indirectness may have led women to interpret questions differently, for example, different sets of references for peers could have been used.

Self-reporting aspects of the questionnaires must also increase discrepancies. It is not known to what extent answers to questionnaires are valid and reliable measures of experiences and self-definitions. Hall & Lindsey (1957) p.498 state that:

"what a person says about himself is highly coloured and distorted by defences of various kinds. Self-reports are notoriously lacking in reliability, not because the person may intend to deceive but because he does not know the whole truth about himself".

A concise linear relationship between sex-typing, dissatisfaction and alcohol consumption would be impossible to find with the heterogeneity of women alcoholics, the indirectness of the questionnaire and the reliability of self report measures not being known.

Therefore even accounting for 23% may be important to the etiology of alcoholism.

Finally, the fourth finding was used to consider the working hypothesis that, women who view themselves as more strongly sex-typed will experience more dissatisfaction with their sex-roles and will consume more alcohol to relieve associated pressures. Therefore the correlation between sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction was examined. The correlation between the two variables was significant. This linear relationship suggests that women who are strongly sex-typed experience more sex-role dissatisfaction. However the linear association is only weak and so predictions about a women's behaviour cannot be made on the basis of this alone.

6. CONCLUSION:

There are four main conclusions to be drawn from the present research and a recommendation for the treatment of women alcoholics.

- (1) There is not a significant statistical relationship between sex-typing and alcohol consumption. However, an apparent trend between sex-typing scores suggests that alcoholic women are more sex-typed than non-alcoholic women. It is inferred that this sex-typing occurs after women begin to adopt alcoholic drinking patterns. Further it is suggested that alcoholic women who begin to see themselves as masculine, do so in order to cope with discrepancies between their self-perceptions and their behaviour. Whereas other alcoholic women begin to perceive themselves as overly feminine in order to compensate for their masculine drinking behaviour. Those alcoholic women who remain unsex-typed may not experience the same discrepancies between themselves and their behaviour. Therefore both high masculinity and high femininity may be considered to be maladjustive in alcoholic women.

Further research is required before any conclusions can be attained. In conducting further research, a larger sample size is recommended. Also, an initial division of the women's sex-typing scores into those which are sex-typed and those which are not. This may highlight differences between drinking levels more successfully.
- (2) The second conclusion is that alcoholic women experience more sex-role dissatisfaction than do women who do not regularly drink alcohol. With a trend suggesting that alcoholic women also experience more sex-role dissatisfaction than women who do drink alcohol regularly.

It is suggested that sex-role dissatisfaction may be a major factor in the alcoholic women's low self-esteem. Also sex-role dissatisfaction may be a major contributor to the anxiety that alcoholic women experience. The low self-esteem of women alcoholics increases dissatisfaction, which then leads to more anxiety as women become more susceptible to pressures from other significant people in their lives. As anxiety increases so does the need for alcohol in order to copy with these pressures.

Further research is recommended to test relationships that are only seen as trends in the present research. Again, a larger sample size is required to give more significant results. A larger sample size would help to overcome some of the discrepancies caused by the indirectness of the questionnaire and unreliability of self-report measures. The sex-role dissatisfaction questionnaire's reliability and validity would also have to be considered in further research.

- (3) The third conclusion is that sex-role dissatisfaction and sex-typing do have a statistically significant linear relationship with alcohol consumption. Although large error margins are associated with their predictive power. Sex-role dissatisfaction is the major variable in predictions, as sex-typing alone does not have a significant linear relationship with alcohol consumption.
- (4) The final conclusion is that women who are highly sex-typed may experience more sex-role dissatisfaction. However, the relationship between sex-typing and sex-role dissatisfaction is not strong. Why this relationship exists, and whether its strength would increase with a larger sample size would be suitable questions for further research.

From the present research a treatment recommendation can be made, that is, in the treatment of alcoholic women some emphasis should be placed on womens' sex-role dissatisfaction with a view to heightening self-esteem, thereby helping alleviate her need for alcohol.

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APPENDIX I:

UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Questionnaire

OFFICE USE
ONLY

Please tick one box in each question that you believe is the most appropriate to you and then rate how you feel about this situation by ticking one of the boxes in the second set of choices. Please continue doing this for all the questions with this format.

1. - I believe the most important thing in my life will be or has been my marriage ☐
- I believe the most important thing in my life will be or has been my children ☐
- I believe the most important thing in my life will be or has been my career ☐

(If necessary you may choose two boxes, but put two ticks in the box that is the most important to you)

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐
- I feel bothered by ☐
- I feel indifferent about ☐
- I feel happy with ☐
- I feel very happy with ☐

2. - I am satisfied with my performance as a mother and I believe I am doing a good job ☐
- I am reasonably satisfied with my performance as a mother and believe I am doing an average job ☐
- I am not satisfied with my performance as a mother and do not believe I am doing a good job ☐
- This does not apply (N/A) as I have no children ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐
- I feel bothered by ☐
- I feel indifferent about ☐

OFFICE USE

- I feel happy with ☐
- I feel very happy with ☐
- This does not apply as I ticked N/A ☐

- 3.
- I am satisfied with my performance as a wife, or partner, in my relationship ☐
 - I am reasonably satisfied with my performance as a wife, or partner, in my relationship ☐
 - I am not satisfied with my performance as a wife, or partner, in my relationship ☐
 - This does not apply (N/A) as I have no partner ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐
- I feel bothered by ☐
- I feel indifferent about ☐
- I feel happy with ☐
- I feel very happy with ☐
- This situation does not apply as I ticked N/A ☐

- 4.
- I am satisfied with the development of my career ☐
 - I am reasonably satisfied with the development of my career ☐
 - I am not satisfied with the development of my career ☐
 - This does not apply (N/A) as I have never had employment outside the home or never had what I consider to be a career ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐
- I feel bothered by ☐
- I feel indifferent about ☐
- I feel happy with ☐
- I feel very happy with ☐
- This does not apply as I ticked N/A ☐

OFFICE USE

5. - I regard the sex-role I play in life as being mainly masculine ☐
- I regard the sex-role I play in life as being both masculine and feminine ☐
- I regard the sex-role I play in life as being mainly feminine ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐
- I feel bothered by ☐
- I feel indifferent about ☐
- I feel happy with ☐
- I feel very happy with ☐

6. - I regard my partner's or a male's sex-role as more important than mine ☐
- I regard my partner's or a male's sex-role to be as equally important as mine ☐
- I regard my partner's or a male's sex-role as less important than mine ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐
- I feel bothered by ☐
- I feel indifferent about ☐
- I feel happy with ☐
- I feel very happy with ☐

7. - I believe the masculine sex-role is more important to society ☐
- I believe that masculine and feminine sex-roles are equally important to society ☐
- I believe the feminine sex-role is more important to society ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐
- I feel bothered by ☐
- I feel indifferent about ☐

OFFICE USE

- I feel happy with ☐- I feel very happy with ☐8. - I would like my sex-role in life to be more masculine than it is ☐- I would like my sex-role in life to stay as it is ☐- I would like my sex-role in life to be more feminine than it is ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐- I feel bothered by ☐- I feel indifferent about ☐- I feel happy with ☐- I feel very happy with ☐9. - I believe my partner would like to me to adopt a masculine role ☐- I believe my partner is happy with my sex-role as it is ☐- I believe my partner would like me to adopt a more feminine role ☐- This does not apply (N/A) as I don't have a partner ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐- I feel bothered by ☐- I feel indifferent about ☐- I feel happy with ☐- I feel very happy with ☐- This does not apply as I ticked N/A ☐10. - I believe my children would like me to adopt a more masculine role ☐- I believe my children are happy with my sex-role as it is ☐- I believe my children would like me to adopt a more feminine role ☐

- This does not apply (N/A) as I don't have children or they no longer live at home

☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by

☐

- I feel bothered by

☐

- I feel indifferent about

☐

- I feel happy with

☐

- I feel very happy with

☐

- This does not apply as I ticked N/A

☐

11. - I believe my parents would like me to adopt a more masculine role

☐

- I believe my parents are happy with my sex-role as it is

☐

- I believe my parents would like me to adopt a more feminine role

☐

- This does not apply (N/A) as I have no parents or I no longer see my parents

☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by

☐

- I feel bothered by

☐

- I feel indifferent by

☐

- I feel happy with

☐

- I feel very happy with

☐

- This does not apply as I ticked N/A

☐

12. - Most of my female friends are employed outside the home

☐

- An equal number of my female friends are employed or are housewives

☐

- Most of my female friends are housewives

☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by

☐

- I feel bothered by

☐

OFFICE USE

- I feel indifferent about ☐

- I feel happy with ☐

- I feel very happy with ☐

13. - I believe that most of my female friends would prefer to have mainly masculine roles in their life ☐

- I believe that most of my female friends would prefer to have a balance of feminine and masculine roles in their life ☐

- I believe that most of my female friends would prefer to have mainly feminine roles in their life ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐

- I feel bothered by ☐

- I feel indifferent about ☐

- I feel happy with ☐

- I feel very happy with ☐

14. - In choosing this outlook I believe that most of my female friends are happier than I am ☐

- In choosing this outlook I believe that most of my female friends are as happy as I am ☐

- In choosing this outlook I believe that most of my female friends are not as happy as I am ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐

- I feel bothered by ☐

- I feel indifferent about ☐

- I feel happy with ☐

- I feel very happy with ☐

15. - I am aware of pressure from female friends to have a mainly masculine role in life ☐

- I am not aware of any pressure from female friends to change my sex-role ☐

OFFICE USE

- I am aware of pressure from female friends to have a mainly feminine role in life

☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by
- I feel bothered by
- I feel indifferent about
- I feel happy with
- I feel very happy with

☐☐☐☐☐

16. - I am aware of pressure from male friends (other than my partner) to have a mainly masculine role in life

☐

- I am not aware of any pressure from male friends (other than my partner) to change my sex-role

☐

- I am aware of pressure from male friends (other than my partner) to have a mainly feminine role in life

☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by
- I feel bothered by
- I feel indifferent about
- I feel happy with
- I feel very happy with

☐☐☐☐☐

17. - I see myself as having a more masculine sex-role in the next 5-10 years

☐

- I see myself remaining the same in the next 5-10 years

☐

- I see myself as having a more feminine sex-role in the next 5-10 years

☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by
- I feel bothered by
- I feel indifferent about
- I feel happy with

☐☐☐☐

OFFICE USE

- I feel very happy with ☐

18. - I believe that what I do is always determined by how people think a woman should behave ☐

- I believe that what I do is sometimes determined by how people think a woman should behave ☐

- I believe that what I do is never determined by how people think a woman should behave ☐

This situation that I have just ticked

- I feel very bothered by ☐

- I feel bothered by ☐

- I feel indifferent about ☐

- I feel happy with ☐

- I feel very happy with ☐

19. - I drink alcoholic drinks ☐

- I do not drink alcoholic drinks ☐

Please fill in these personal history details by ticking the box that applies to you.

20. How often do you drink

- 4 or more times a week ☐

- once or twice a week ☐

- two or three times a month ☐

- rarely or never ☐

21. On average how much do you drink on these occasions?
(Please count one drink as - 1 sherry or port (a glass)
- 1 glass of wine
- 1 nip of spirits
- 1 12oz beer

- 7 or more drinks ☐

- 5 or 6 drinks ☐

- 2 to 4 drinks ☐

- 1 drink ☐

OFFICE USE

22. My age in years is

(Please write your age in the box)

23. My marital status

- married

- de facto

- divorced

- separated

- widowed

- single

24. My main occupation is - housewife

- professional/
semi-professional

- managerial/official

- Store/office/sales

- supervisor/representative

- unskilled work

- student

- other (please specify)

If unemployed please state your last occupation

25. - My husband's occupation is:

- professional/
semi-professional

- managerial/official

- office/sales

- supervisor/representative/
tradesman

- unskilled

- student

- other (please specify)

- N/A as I haven't a husband

OFFICE USE

If your husband is unemployed please state their last occupation unless they have been unemployed for more than two years, then write "unemployed" in the "other" category.

26. - My mother was employed:

- full-time

- part-time (less than 24 hours a week)

- as a housewife

- was unemployed

☐☐☐☐

27. - My education consisted of:

- primary school only

- high school

- high school qualification (i.e. S.C., U.E.)

- tertiary education

☐☐☐☐

28. My race is -

- European

- Maori

- Other (Please specify) _____

☐☐